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Fire away

Rhett Spooner of Haliburton tests out the fire hoses during First Responders Day on May 1 at the Dysart Fire Department. For more photos, see inside this edition. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Insurance questions arise in Dysart STR rules

JAMES MATTHEWS

Staff Reporter

As there's bound to be a hiccup or two with anything that's new, so too does Dysart's short-term rental regulations

require some tweaking.

Township council asked staff in March to take a look at the ins and outs of its STR application process and to suggest some possible solutions. Council had a look at the nuts and bolts of that when it met April 22.

Some hurdles municipal staff identified

included issues with site plans, and building code and zoning violations.

The most prevalent issue with building code violations is related to the septic system and the number of bedrooms and guests accommodated.

Municipal staff refers the applicant to complete a septic review to decommis-

sion a bedroom. If they have too many beds in a bedroom, staff requests beds be removed and that the removal is verified prior to licence approval.

If more bedrooms are required, then septic systems have to be upgraded.

see HIGH page 2



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Wigamog burns

At approximately 4 a.m. on Saturday, May 3, the Dysart Fire Department was called to the historic Wigamog Inn on Kashagawigamog Lake to deal with a structure fire. Crews were able to quell the flames, but not before significant damage was done to the main structure of the facility. The *Echo* has reached out to authorities for further details, but at the time of press, no additional information is available. The *Echo* will continue to provide updates as they are made public. /photo submitted



High insurance costs may lessen STR applications

from page 1

Karl Korpela, the township’s chief building official, said site plan issues include a lack of measurements, specifically from the high water mark and not including the shore road allowance where applicable.

“You essentially need a surveyor if the pins aren’t locatable with regards to the shore road allowance,” he said. “It wasn’t anticipated that we would go to that level for the short-term rentals. That you would need to hire a surveyor to find out where your actual shore road allow-

ance is.”

GIS (geographic information system) mapping is not detailed enough, so a surveyor would need to be hired.

Council has the option to eliminate the shore road allowance requirement. But, because more insurance is required for properties on the shore road allowance, Korpela suggested the overall insurance level is increased if council is to axe the shore road requirement.

The minimum liability insurance should be raised from \$2 million to \$5 million. And the municipality should be named as an additionally insured party.

That would also lead to dumping the need for a licence of occupation as part of the STR application. The additional insurance is currently required for a licence of occupation, Korpela said.

“It’s just an option that’s available for council,” Korpela said. “We’re not saying that it’s the best option.”

It’s merely a means to be rid of an obstacle that’s proven difficult for township staff and STR applicants, he said.

Mallory Bishop, the township’s clerk, said if somebody is injured on a dock or at the shoreline, the homeowner or STR property owner can say simply that the injury happened on municipal land.

“They kind of wash their hands of it,” she said. “Their

insurance company might say this (injury) actually didn’t take place on your land so we’re not covering it.”

So foregoing the shore road allowance requirement is an option, but the township is taking on a risk by allowing that, she said.

“And that risk is with taxpayer money at the end of the day,” Bishop said.

Hailey Cole, the municipal bylaw enforcement officer, said a licence of occupation would entail a \$500 application fee and then \$500 annual fee. Then there’s the \$500 fee for the STR. So applicants will pay \$1,500 in the first year, followed by \$1,000 every year thereafter.

Increasing the insurance liability threshold increases STR proprietors’ costs from \$1,964 for the \$2 million coverage to \$5,513 for \$5 million.

It was said that, with such high dollar amounts, it may be unlikely many applications for STR licences will be submitted.

Korpela said the \$5 million coverage is currently required for a licence of occupation.

“So people are doing it now,” Councillor Barry Boice said of paying for the higher insurance discussed.

“I’m to the point that I think we need more time with this thing,” Mayor Murray Fearrey said. “This is fairly complicated.”

“I think we should reach out to some insurance companies to see what the Average Joe is paying, just to verify that,” Boice said. “If it’s \$200 difference or \$2,000, we’ll have a better idea.”

“Normally it’s not that much,” Fearrey said.

“I’ve heard some of the residents down in Algonquin Highlands that they can’t even get insurance that Algonquin Highlands is wanting through some policies that their homes have,” Boice said.

Coun. Pat Casey suggested local rental agencies be contacted and asked about their rates to better get “insurance ideas.”

“We’re not trying to run them out of business,” he said. “We’ve just got to find some common ground, that’s all.”

Fearrey suggested the issue be deferred until more information is available.

Council agreed.

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Speeding concerns bring disharmony to Harmony Rd.

JAMES MATTHEWS

Staff Reporter

Engineers have determined Harmony Road's acceptable speed limit, but residents have told Dysart council that the designation is too fast for their liking.

Rob Camelon, the township's public works director, said there's been a request for a speed reduction on Harmony Road from 50 kilometres per hour to 30 kms/hr.

In a letter to council, residents cited a handful of reasons for the change.

The thoroughfare is a medium density residential road that is not straight. It has two sharp bends that are basically blind turns.

The road's numerous potholes and bumps present hazards to motorists.

There is a large deer population in the area from Highway 118 to the dead end at

the road's bottom where the animals bed down near a stream.

A number of children between the ages of three years old to early teens live along Harmony Road. And there are such amenities as hockey and soccer nets and basketball hoops along the road.

The road's connection to Head Lake Trail draws many residents and visitors, some with dogs, who walk along the road.

Numerous people on snowmobiles have been seen to race along Harmony Road at high speeds. Other all-terrain vehicles use the road in the summer.

Regardless of those concerns, Camelon suggested council deny the speed reduction request. The municipality got a speed limit study in January 2024 that recommended the current speed limit, he said.

"Okay, we've done the study then," Mayor Murray Fearrey said.

Mallory Bishop, the township's clerk,

read a resolution that council deny the residents' request.

But the resolution failed to draw a second order to move it.

"So you do want to reduce the speed then, do you?" Fearrey said.

A councillor could be heard to indicate they were in favour of the reduction.

"Well, you can do it on every road," Fearrey said.

Councillor Barry Boice said the issue is similar to one in Guilford where residents of a road keep asking for speed limit reductions and it's all for naught.

"They put the signs up to tell you how fast you're going and people still speed," Boice said. "It's up to the OPP, not a sign."

As enforcement is needed more than signs, Boice suggested Deputy Mayor Walt McKechnie to voice those concerns during OPP police services board meetings.

"I don't know a road we've got where

people don't speed on it," Fearrey said. "So what're we going to do?"

A need for more enforcement was again suggested, as was the suggestion to relocate camera equipped radar signs.

"They just go by the signs and then they step on it," Fearrey said of some motorists.

Still, the motion to deny the residents' request failed to attract a seconder.

"Okay, do whatever you want," Fearrey said.

"Why don't we wait until I present this at the police board meeting that's coming up very soon here?" McKechnie said. "I'll be able to get something back to you."

"Harmony Road is a dead-end road," Camelon said. "Chances are, if anybody is speeding, it's the people that live along the road."

And they'll slow down once they get nailed a couple times (with radar camera fines)," Coun. Nancy Wood-Roberts said.

Dysart to look into upgrades for Epic Rd. winter work

JAMES MATTHEWS

Staff Reporter

Epic Road residents in Dysart have lobbied the township to assume responsibility for the thoroughfare's maintenance during the summer months.

Tending to the road a few hundred metres long in the winter would make it year-round.

Epic Road has 11 properties off of Pine Point Road, including several four-season homes. Dysart currently maintains the municipally-owned road in the summer.

Rob Camelon, the township's public works director, said the road is in what's called a limited service zone.

"It's quite a narrow road compared to others," he said.

The municipal asset management plan described the thoroughfare as being four metres wide when seven metres is required to accommodate winter snow

plowing operations.

"We're not recommending that then," Mayor Murray Fearrey said.

No, Camelon said.

"I don't think we should, either," Fearrey said.

Mallory Bishop, the township's clerk, was asked during council's April 22 meeting to put a cap on the discussion by way of a resolution.

But hold on.

Councillor Barry Boice asked if anybody on council or in Public Works has spoken to the Epic Road residents.

"I did speak to them and their concern was there's a road right beside them that's the exact same road," he said.

Municipal equipment traverses the adjacent road and drives back out.

"It's a circle," he said. "It's not that you have to go in and turn around and come back (out)."

Camelon said that description sounded like Pine Point Road, which is already maintained by the municipality year-

round. But it isn't unlike Champlain Road, which is also in that area.

"For years and years we didn't maintain Champlain in the winter," Camelon said. "And the ratepayers in the area actually spent money to upgrade it so we started plowing it."

The problem with Epic Road is that it's quite narrow and would need to be widened before the township can maintain it in winter, he said.

It's council's decision whether to assume winter responsibility of the road

after residents upgrade it. Camelon said Epic Road is "a little trickier because we do maintain it in the summer months."

It's also council's decision to do a cost-sharing effort with the residents to upgrade Epic Road.

"Ultimately, it does need some work," he said.

"We need a report back," Fearrey said.

Bishop asked if it is possible that the road be brought to municipal standard.

"We'd have to take a closer look," Camelon said.

Ice Out winner named

Congratulations to Haliburton's Yvon Gaboury, who guessed the correct date for our Ice Out contest of April 21, 2025. The last bits of ice on Head Lake melted away on that exact date. Gaboury has won a year's subscription to the *Halibur-*

ton Echo. Thank you to everyone who submitted their guesses to our annual contest.

Staff

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Let's talk about poop

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

What do septic inspectors and four-year-old children have in common?

They like to talk about poop. Sometimes around the dinner table.

But as Rob Davis pointed out at the 17th annual Lake Health meeting on May 3, we should all be talking about poop a lot more.

The meeting was put on by the Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners Associations (CHA) - an organization entirely dedicated to protecting and enhancing the health of the lakes across Haliburton County.

With septic health on top of mind in an effort to sustain and maintain the shorelines and waterways across the region, the meeting was an apt location to showcase *Poop Talk, the Number 2*, a creation of Sticks and Stones Media.

"The purpose of this video is to get everyone to understand how to improve the quality of water on their lakes," opened Tammy Rea of Sticks and Stones.

The short film - which is available on the CHA website - is a sequel to the original *Poop Talk*, which was filmed a few years ago in Haliburton and shared widely online. It was quickly picked up by education forums, including the education system in Australia, as a tool to educate and explain the complexities of septic systems.

With so much engagement, Sticks and Stones, alongside septic specialist Rob Davis, decided to give it a go again; this time, with *Poop Talk, the Number 2*. The film was put together by a group of ded-



The 'Dream Team' who put the film *Poop Talk, the Number 2* together, in an effort to raise awareness around septic and lake health. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

icated individuals, whom Paul McInnes, the President of the CHA, refers to as 'the Dream Team'.

With additional support from the Haliburton County Development Corporation, the group took to tackling the topic of poop, and best practices for keeping your property up to par. "We need to start thinking about our septic systems the same way we think about our digestive systems," opens Davis, who narrates

the film.

It goes on to continue the comparison between the human body and a standard septic system; both using varying bacteria to break down components for maximum health, both following a track from start to finish, and both needing regular maintenance and upkeep in order to stay healthy and working properly.

When there is an imbalance of phosphorus and nitrogen seeping from the septic tanks, they can leach into lakes, rivers, and waterways, which throws off the fine balance of the natural world. An excess of these elements in a lake would cause excessive growth of aquatic plants, and toxic algae blooms. On top of these blooms significantly impacting your property value (with an identified decrease of 30 per cent or more,) they also kill off fish and wildlife, harm swimmers, and throw off the entire balance of the lake.

"Every time you send water down the drain, an equal amount of liquid effluent - that's the stuff that leaves the septic tank - is disposed of on the property," said Davis.

If the bacteria does not have time to properly break down the contents of the tank, you run the risk of polluting your property and waterways.

So what are the septic sins that can cause these imbalances? Number one, overuse. "Spread out your water use," says Davis, noting that the systems are only designed to break down a small amount at a time, and they need to pace it out in order for the microbiomes to process the waste effectively.

Next up comes chemicals. "Many household products we use every day

contain harsh chemicals or detergents which kill or inhibit the bacteria's ability to do their job," noted Davis.

The third cause for problems is inadequate septic maintenance. Just like the need to get a medical check up every few years, your septic tank requires the same maintenance, to ensure things are running smoothly.

Next up is the wrong volume of microbes. Being mindful of what we put in our septic system that is beyond human waste will impact the type of bacteria needed to thrive.

Of course, the environment plays a big role in maintaining septic health. "We all need to take care of the land between our septic tanks and our bodies of water," noted Davis.

Lastly, water softeners and iron filters also play a role in impacting the balance of the systems.

The film goes on to discuss seasonal use around septic tanks; a topic which is relevant to the many cottagers in the area.

Blue-green algae has been found every year in Haliburton County for the past 11 years. In 2024, it was identified in dozens of lakes across the region. Proper septic health and awareness are key in mitigating the risks associated with the blooms.

In appreciation for the dedication and hard work for the organizers of the film - over 40 hours of filming for an eight-minute product - the CHA presented the Dream Team with one acre of protected land in Dahl Forest in each of their names. It was a teary acceptance, with gratitude around the awareness the film is bringing to the new audiences.

Poop Talk, the Number 2 is available on the CHA website, at www.cohpoa.org.

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Zilstra slices a retirement cakes during his last day as publisher for the *Haliburton Echo*.



Doug Rowe of London Publishing thanked David Zilstra for his years of dedication to the industry. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Zilstra hangs up his publishing hat

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

It's all about the people.

For David Zilstra, that's what it's always been. Thirty-six years in the newspaper industry. Countless boards, organizations, and volunteer opportunities. Awards and plaques stacked up on his desk, including a nod as the community's Highlander of the Year.

But it's all about the people. That's what kept him going. Every step of the way.

After nearly four decades of dedication and service, Zilstra will be hanging up his publishing hat. He started with the *Haliburton Echo* in 2005, having already committed years to the industry in Napanee. He had originally started with sales and ad management, before naturally evolving into publishing and the multi-faceted components of that role.

Zilstra stepped away from the *Echo* briefly in 2009, before returning in 2014, and rebuilding the team, the drive, and the papers as a whole.

When he looked back on his career with the local papers, some of his favourite times include municipal election coverage. "I've seen a few," he chuckled. "But it's a fun time. People are wanting to run ads, they want to run news stories, you're talking to people on the street all the time. It's so busy, but it's exciting."

And Zilstra is no stranger to chatting with people on the street. When he was awarded Highlander of the Year in 2023, his connection with the community was top of mind. "As publisher of the *Haliburton County Echo*, the *Minden Times*, *County Life* and two other community newspapers in Bancroft, the constant face-to-face engagement with local business and the wider community that are a key aspect of his job has made him acutely aware of the area's complex needs," read his nomination, sent in by a former colleague of Zilstra's.

He was an active member of the Haliburton BIA, Haliburton Rotary, the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation, and the Highlands Summer Festival, to name a few. "David Zilstra has distinguished himself as a community leader by providing thousands of hours of his time to make the Haliburton Highlands a



standout place to work and live," said his nomination. "He has served as the publisher of three local newspapers during a tumultuous time in the media industry and provided high-quality year round jobs to many local residents."

When asked about his role as publisher, Zilstra didn't identify one singular task that keeps him busy. Rather, it's a plethora of ongoing projects that keep the papers running. "I like the fast paced life," he said. "And I want to make sure everyone has the tools they need to get things done here."

On Thursday, May 1, the *Echo* hosted a retirement party for Zilstra, with over 100 locals popping by the offices to shake his hand and wish him well. "This is such a nice showing of community," noted Angelica Ingram, the manager of tourism for the County of Haliburton, and a former writer for the *Haliburton Echo*. "It's so nice to see everyone come together for David."

Doug Rowe, who works for London Publishing, shared that he had worked with Zilstra for many years, and the two had set up a weekly phone call to discuss the ins and outs, the highs and lows, of the trade. "I have to say, it's been an absolute pleasure to work with David," he said, to a room of cheers and applause.

"I've had a great career," noted Zilstra, "and I appreciate everyone being here. With all the work and fun we have, we also make a lot of friends."

“

*I've had a great career ...
With all the work and fun
we have, we also make a lot
of friends.*

— David Zilstra

ing in the community, of course," he said, "because the biggest thing I'll miss is the people here."

Because for David Zilstra, it's all about the people.

From the teams at the *Haliburton Echo*, the *Minden Times*, *County Life*, and the Bancroft division, thank you to our fearless leader over the years. We wish you all the best in retirement.

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Representation

WHEN JESSICA Slade approached me about writing some columns for our newspapers leading up to the federal election, I was elated.

Slade brings over a decade of political experience to the table, and was able to offer depth and understanding to all levels of the election.

I had multiple people reach out and say that her insight had helped in some capacity. As a busy mom of two on top of her professional career, Slade also runs the online page Civics with Slade. And as she has articulated in past columns, politics doesn't end when elections wrap up. If anything, it's just getting started.

In a recent post, Slade broke down the top candidate names from ridings across the country. "I was curious about name patterns across parties, so I downloaded the full Elections Canada candidate list and crunched the numbers," she said.

Out of 1900 candidates, the top six were all male-coded names. Michael, David, Chris, John, Paul, and Daniel, in that order. There were no female names in that list. "This isn't just about the names," said Slade. "It's about the continued underrepresentation of women and gender-diverse people in Canadian politics."

And this got me thinking about representation. Now don't get me wrong, I would never vote for someone based solely on their gender affiliation. Experience, skills, and overall decorum takes priority during election time.

But why aren't we seeing more women in Canadian politics? Is the environment unwelcoming? Is it because they are the ones primarily focused on child raising? Maybe it's because it ... shudder ... hasn't really

been done before?

It's not a glass ceiling these women are looking up towards, it's a pinhole of light, distantly past layers of bricks and mortar purposely put in place by decades of misogyny.

It's an uphill battle. And sometimes we think we're making ground. Little by little, chipping away at the imbalance, until we're knocked down again, back to the bottom of the mountain.

Gender wage gaps, limited access to gender affirming care, questions about our reproductive health and biological clocks somehow shadowing our competency, our worth, our value.

While my family and I watched the televised debates of the federal election, there was a stark absence of women on those stages.

And to me, that's not something that's startling. It's something I'm used to. Yes, I noticed it, but I didn't really think twice about it.

But my kids did. "They're all men?" they said. Yes, they are. All with different ideas, some better than others. "But, they're all men?" they reiterated.

Yes. They are.

And again, I give credit to those individuals who truly care about their communities and their country on a national stage; both men and women.

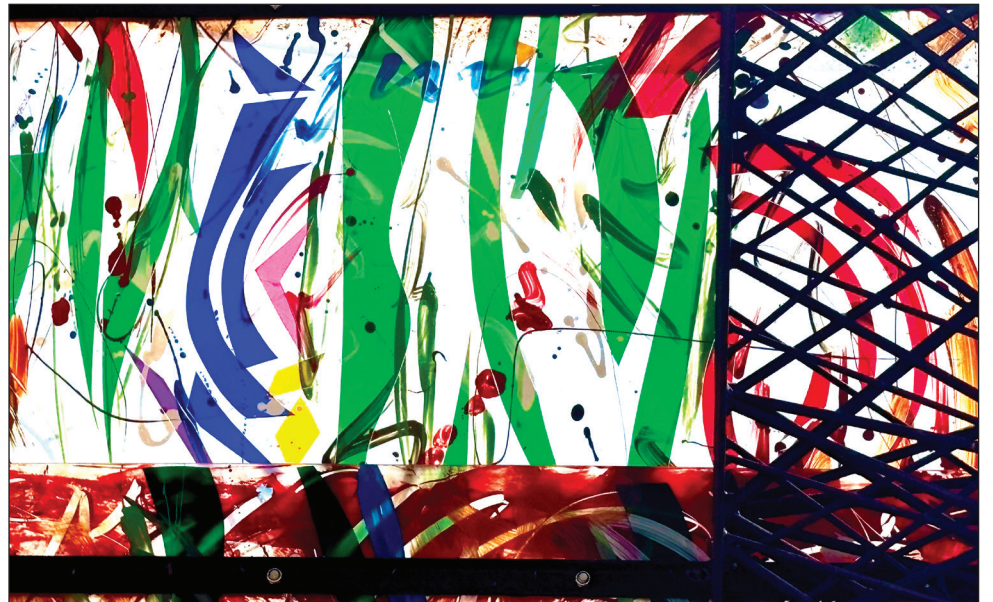
But maybe it's not even about politics. It's about representation. About having a seat at the table, about seeing faces that look like ours, about the stories and experiences these women can bring to a conversation that could impact a population.

So when our little girls peer up at that shadowy glass ceiling, they don't just see a distant pinhole of promise. They see all the faces of women who have walked before them towards that light, and are willing to grab their little hands, and pull them up.



emily
stonehouse

Editorial



Twisting curves and bold lines. Do you know where this pop of colour is in Haliburton? /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

Changing the channel

WHEN JIM awoke, he had a bad feeling. It was almost a dread, but of what he couldn't say. So he lay there in bed, trying to figure out what might be causing this trepidation. Perhaps, he thought, it was the time of year. Spring was a wonderful season for most people. Trees budding. Birds returning. Rhubarb peeking. But it was different for Jim. A heavy season of work appeared on his horizon and it would continue until mid-October.

Jim was a handyman, and he was constantly being called on by seasonal residents. Whether it was starting up water systems, mending water lines, replacing deck boards or shingling porches: Jim was your man. Small jobs were his territory and his customers loved him for it. He knew the big contractors had neither the time nor the inclination to do the little tasks that still needed doing.

He didn't have to advertise his skills. Word got around pretty fast once the repair season began and Jim could be busy eight days a week if he didn't know when to put on the brakes. Put on the brakes. Yes that described the feeling he would get when there were too many people calling him and not enough hours in the day. He learned how to say no. It wasn't easy for a man who liked to help, to accommodate, to feel the appreciation of those in need of his skills.

So was that the problem, he asked himself, finally pulling out from under the sheets and heading to the kitchen for that essential first cup of coffee. Imagine springtime being a problem, he chuckled, looking out the window. The sun had just started to peek over the hill behind his house and despite himself, that golden glow lifted his spirits.

Jim already had a list of tasks to finish before the May long weekend. But he told himself they'd all get done, even if right now he sat down with a coffee and watched those first, soft moments as the world came alive once more. And

finally that was what he decided to focus on. The world coming alive as it did every morning.

He opened the patio door and heard the song birds calling out for mates. Robins hopped about the yard and the crows shouted from atop the pines. Morning light warmed the still-bare branches on the birch and maples and a very pregnant doe picked her way past the wood shed. New life stirred everywhere.

In the midst of such tranquil beauty, what right did he have to feel anything but peace and happiness? However Jim was wise enough to know that feelings were what they were and didn't have anything to do with rights or reason. Perhaps, he thought, his negative state had nothing to do with all the chores listed on his fridge door. It was something else. And as soon as he turned on the radio he knew what it was.

The news. Death, disease, destruction. Economic collapse, environmental degradation and genocide. He turned it off and instead, looked once again outside. Jim looked at the trees, the birds, the deer and the dawn light. This was his world, he reminded himself. It was not the whole world but right now, it was his. There was very little he could do about that other world, the one he heard reported every day.

Finishing his coffee, he took the list down from the fridge and studied it. He would do the first three jobs today. That should take him to mid-afternoon. Then he'll drop by his neighbour Monika's and see if she was up for a game of cribbage after supper. There was always a lot of laughs when they played. They had known each other since they were children and Monika knew how the world sometimes pulled Jim down. But like the world outside his house this morning, she always helped lift his spirits. And there would be no talk of the news.

Down



sharon
lynch

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points of view

The seven-second hug

THE OTHER day, I reminded Jenn of the adage, “As you get older, you get wiser.” This caused her to look at me and reply with another adage about there being an exception to every rule.

So, just to prove her wrong, I walked up to her and gave her a seven-second hug.

The seven-second hug is my secret weapon of late. Done correctly (without communication or context) it can cause a desired outcome – for instance, unsolicited encouragement to go fishing.

Of course, I did not just stumble upon this – seven seconds is not some random duration I pulled out of thin air. It has taken minutes of research. I have now tested it so thoroughly, that I can safely introduce to the public without inciting any legal repercussions.

My research was inspired by the family gatherings of my youth and the overly long hugs my aunts would give us kids. Back then, I thought these were awkward, uncomfortable, and cruel acts of affection. But now that I am older and

wiser, I recognize them for what they really were: a brilliant method to ensure we never bothered them again for the entire visit. For it would take nothing short of an amputated limb before approaching within 10 feet of the aunt who hugged you thusly.

Though I now understood the intention, the science behind it was less clear.

The question was how long a hug was required to induce that effect?

I took my research seriously too. At one point I even ordered a white lab coat, pencil protector,

and a dozen laboratory rats to hug. Unfortunately, when the people who ensure the ethical treatment of lab animals heard what I was about to do, they refused to sell me the rats.

Instead, I had to experiment on Jenn, which required a tightening of my safety protocols.

What follows are my research notes:

“After a full day of providing the subject with one-second hugs, she is starting to believe I am clumsy. Her general thought after each of these one-second hugs is that I have bumped into her and am clinging on just enough to regain my balance and not fall. Rather than repulsing her, it causes to her feel sorry for me. Once, she even asked, “Are you OK?”

A two-second hug provided similar results. The difference is the subject still thinks it is taking me longer to regain my balance. She has suggested the purchase of a walker.

The three-second hug is apparently the sweet spot where the subject is convinced the hug is for purely affectionate reasons. This is dangerous: my subject felt emboldened enough to ask for a foot rub, to which I had to comply.

The four-second hug was undesirable as it induced sympathy and incited a conversation where “feelings” were discussed.

Meticulous observation revealed that the five-second hug is long, but not long enough to be as awkward as desired. It also prompted the subject to say, “Are you about to try a new wrestling move on me?” This did not end well.

The six-second hug is bothersome but still shy of repulsive, unless issued after forgetting to put on deodorant. As such it is not preferred.

The seven-second hug appears to cause the right amount of awkwardness, annoyance, and, frequently, a struggle to escape. No one who has experienced a seven-second hug has asked for more. Moreover, when done without uttering a word, it triggers the subject to avoid you for an indeterminate amount of time.

I can hardly wait for the next family gathering ...”



steve
galea

Loon Tales



pic of the past

This photo was submitted by Brian Black. On the back, the names read: Vivan Simms, Mrs. C. Barry, Rene Roberts, Olga Black, Mrs. Hill, Margaret Bisse, Alice Morrison, Margaret Hill, Wilma Barry, Corine Simms, Mrs. Thompson. / FILE

letters to the editor

Charles or Trump

To the Editor,

Should I write or comment about this? Who do you vilify? Is support for one, a meaning of “monarchist” while support for the other is favouring “oligarchy”? Should Mr. Carney visit Mr. Trump in Washington? It is a gamble and could go sideways very easily. Should His Majesty in person open our parliament? It as well is a gamble.

Which is the most dangerous to obtaining a positive outcome?

If Mr. Carney visits Mr. Trump and he is treated like President Zelensky then Canada is left lying on the floor. If Mr. Carney asserts our sovereignty too strong Trump will retaliate.

If we invite His Majesty to open parliament will we insult or offend the people of Quebec and those against our association with the Monarchy?

Asking His Majesty to open parliament is a strong personal and universal statement that

Canada is a full stand alone sovereign country relying on the democratic principle. It becomes a world wide demonstration of that fact. It reinforces the principles of the “Magna Carta” that have evolved to our present democracy and that the statement of government that he reads out are the statements of the people that we the people have elected as our representatives. They are not his statements they are ours.

On the other hand the statements of governance of the country to the south of us are not of the people but only those of one man who has engendered fear and chaos if they are opposed.

I am not a raving monarchist nor a supporter of Mr. Carney’s political party but just a concerned senior citizen. Mr. Carney’s move in this regard is clever and I think positive in the world scene.

David Bishop,
Haliburton

Letters to the Editor note: Submissions are subject to editing for newspaper style and punctuation.

Telling our Stories

On Wednesday, May 14, the *Telling Our Stories* Speakers Series is presenting Chris Hughes, a very interesting gentleman with a most compelling presentation titled “2 Wheels & 3 Ply Tourism”. Chris will regale and inform with stories about his two passions: motorcycles and toilets. That’s right, Mr. Hughes has a 26-year career in tourism development crisscrossing the country, mostly on his motorcycle, while spending much of his vocation looking for the perfect public toilet. He will show examples from around the world of those that get it ... and those that miss the mark. Learn how our society is really lacking the perfect flush.

The Speakers Series, a member of the Haliburton County Community Cooperative, takes place on the second Wednesday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Haliburton Highlands Outdoor Association Fish Hatchery, 6712 Gellert Road. Admission is \$15 per person payable at the door or on line at www.tellingourstories.com/site.

As seating is limited, pre-registration is highly recommended. To obtain tickets, contact Barrie Martin at 705-457-7557 or by email at barrieinthehighlands@gmail.com

Submitted

First Responders Day



Everett, Montgomery and Anna peeking through the windows of the kids' fire house on site. /MICHAEL RILEY staff



Max and Ty sampling some of the treats and getting their questions answered at the First Responders Day event at the Highlands East Fire Station in Wilberforce on May 1.

First Responders Day 2025 celebrated in Haliburton County

MICHAEL RILEY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

First Responders Day was celebrated in Haliburton County on May 1 through a number of free events held around the region that shone a light on the skills, hard work and sacrifice of first responders. The day was celebrated at the Highlands East Fire Department, Station Four in Wilberforce with a plethora of activities and information for everyone who came by. Events were also held in Algonquin Highlands at Station 60 in Dorset, Station 70 in Dwight, Station 60 in Stanhope, in Dysart et al. at the Dysart Fire Department and EMS Base, and in Minden Hills at the Minden Hills EMS Base and Fire Department.

Ontario first proclaimed First Responders Day on May 1 twelve years ago. This year, on April 23, Warden Dave Burton, who is also the mayor of Highlands East, proclaimed May 1 First Responders Day, with the following proclamation;

- Whereas first responders are those who in the early stages of an emergency, are responsible for the protection and preservation of life, property, evidence and the environment; and

- Whereas first responders include professions such as paramedics, police officers, firefighters, doctors, medical evacuation pilots, community emergency managers, road maintenance personnel, and military personnel; and

- Whereas first responders commitment to duty is unwavering, responding to emergencies with courage, compassion and expertise, their skills often mean the difference between life and death; and

- Whereas the services, dedication and commitment of first responders deserve to be recognized and honoured; and

- Whereas in 2013 the Ontario Legislature proclaimed that May 1 of each year would be proclaimed First Responders Day;

- Now Therefore Be It Resolved That I, Warden Dave Burton, on behalf of Haliburton County Council, do hereby proclaim May 1 to be 'First Responders Day' in Haliburton County.

First responders include volunteers and professionals who work as police officers, firefighters, military personnel, paramed-



From left, Highlands East Fire Chief Chris Baughman, Anne and Jan with the Wilberforce FUNraising Group who helped set up the event, Sue Tiffin, Haliburton County's director of community outreach, and Gary Mount, Highlands East deputy fire chief at the First Responders Day.

ics, medical evacuation pilots, dispatchers, nurses, doctors, emergency medical technicians and emergency managers. On May 1, community members were able to visit open houses at bases, halls and stations to learn more about the critical role both professional and volunteer emergency responders have in keeping us safe. They were able to meet local and visiting emergency personnel, learn about programs and services, volunteer and career opportunities, understand how to prepare for emergencies, and get up close to emergency equipment and vehicles.

Sue Tiffin, director of community outreach for Haliburton County, told the *Haliburton Echo* on April 29 that they are excited for First Responders Day 2025, the third annual event celebrating first responders in their community.

"The day honours the work of individuals who have dedicated their lives to public service and whose life-saving skills often make the difference between

life and death. In our small community these are our family members, friends, neighbours, and they work – either professionally or as volunteers – to keep us safe. For the third year, members of the Haliburton County Paramedic Services, municipal fire departments, and the Haliburton Highlands OPP are coming together to invite the public to a Haliburton County-wide community open house to learn more about the critical work first responders do to keep our communities safe. At the April 23 County Council meeting, Warden Dave Burton proclaimed May 1 to be First Responders Day in Haliburton County," she says.

Tiffin says that it's a county-wide event unique to their community, and that while it's a day celebrated throughout Ontario in different ways, they haven't seen anything quite like this happening elsewhere yet. She says residents of all ages are invited to participating ambulance bases, fire halls and police stations

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The day honours the work of individuals who have dedicated their lives to public service and whose life-saving skills often make the difference between life and death.

— Sue Tiffin

in each municipality on May 1.

"The event gives folks a chance to stop in and meet their local emergency personnel, as well as visiting guests (for example, our HHOPP partners often bring K-9, and partners from victim services and CMHA-HKPR); learn more about programs and services offered; hear about volunteer and career opportunities; find out how to prevent or prepare for emergencies; and of course, get an up-close look at emergency equipment and vehicles. The event takes place rain or shine!" she said.

Tiffin reveals that new this year, two additional locations were added to Algonquin Highlands (in Dorset and Oxtongue Lake/Dwight); in Minden, the OPP joined the Minden Fire Department and Haliburton County Paramedic Service base in Minden at one stop rather than separate locations; Haliburton County's Community Paramedics was also at each base to display the equipment they use and discuss the critical and innovative role they play in health equity for our location community; and Haliburton County's new Paramedic Chief for Haliburton County was on site, meeting residents in both Haliburton and Minden.

"From a Community Safety and Well-Being perspective, it's important for community to get together when we can. As a community it's important for us to celebrate each other and recognize the work we do. This is a great opportunity for all

see FIRST page 9

First Responders Day

First Responders open their doors to communities

from page 8

of us to meet first responders when we're not in crisis, and to learn about what we can do to be proactive and take preventative measures to avoid an emergency response whenever possible," she says.

Tiffin said that she tried to attend as many of the events throughout the county, at least one in each local municipality. She says that each location is unique and it's a joy to visit them.

"We always hope there will be a great turn-out of visitors on First Responders Day, both to honour the first responders themselves, who put much effort into making this day special for the community, and to bring the community together to learn about safety, emergency preparation, and response. We remind residents that it's absolutely okay to stop by on their own, or also to bring a neighbour, their children, or grandchildren," she says.

Burton told the *Echo* on May 1 that it's totally impressive what first responders do.

"We can say that they're having a day for this but the years and years of training and to get qualified for what they do and how they do it and how many lives they've saved throughout that training. It's pretty remarkable and quite a dedication and they sure save a lot of lives," he said.

Chris Baughman is the fire chief for Highlands East, and says they get 300 to 325 calls per year, 50 or 60 of them being medical. As far as the questions they get during First Responders Day, he says the kids usually ask about the trucks and hoses and putting the gear on, while the adults query about the burn regulations and other general inquiries. He says it's not every person that can be a first responder.

"I hear it all the time. Oh, I wouldn't be doing that or how do you do it? A thank you goes a long way and we don't always hear that. That's usually all they're looking for is a thank you. They're not looking for any recognition to be a hero. It's just doing what they can when they can. Sometimes there's nothing you can do but at least you were there and tried. We appreciate any good will that comes our way," he says.

Baughman said on May 5 that due to the rainy weather, they had about 30 people come by, which was about half the number from last year when the weather was nicer.

"The responders certainly enjoy talking with the public, hearing their side of a personal emergency where they may have dealt with some of our responders. The thanks are much appreciated and these interactions help provide motivation to continue," he says.

Mike Slatter is the paramedic chief for Haliburton County and thought the day was awesome.

"I think it's a great recognition for all that the front-line people do every day. And it's nice to be able to meet people and show them a few things," he says.

Wade MacPherson is the paramedic deputy chief for Haliburton County and says that at the end of the day they serve the community.

"So much of what we do is behind closed doors with things like patient privacy, so it's nice to have these opportunities to open up and show people what we do. It's very important to us," he says.

On the day of the event, a steady rain reduced attendance numbers, in Wilberforce at least, but a fair number of peo-



County paramedics pause for a photo in Haliburton on First Responders Day. /TIM YANO staff photographer



Kids had an opportunity to try on fire gear at the public open house in Haliburton.



Scottie Spooner takes a local OPP vehicle for a (pretend) spin around the block. /TIM YANO staff photographer



Local kids received a gift bag from the Dysart fire department.

ple came by the fire station to say hello and query the first responders and have a look at the amazing artwork attached to the side of one of the fire trucks that local students had drawn to pay homage to the work that first responders do in their community. The Wilberforce FUNraising Group also had a full spread of cupcakes, cookies, fruits, vegetables and drinks for all those who came by.

Tiffin told the *Haliburton Echo* on May 2 that as always, First Responders Day was a positive event, full of collaboration and community spirit.

"The event was held at six locations around Haliburton County this year. Despite the steady downpour of rain, the day was a great one. Each location really does the day differently – they all offer activities, learning opportunities, and resources – but from one location to the next the event differs, so you could visit multiple locations and have a different experience at each. Kids from throughout the county love the event, of course, and had a great opportunity to learn about the equipment that both our local teams and specialty teams use, and meet the first responders themselves. Some kids return year after year to participate. Adults – with or without kids – are able to ask questions, learn about resources



All were welcome to visit Dysart's Fire Hall on May 1 to get a behind-the-scenes peek at the world of First Responders.

available to prevent or prepare for emergency, and also get a close look at some of the equipment used. Many people in the community stopped by simply to say thanks," she says. "The event is also

great for collaboration and networking between our emergency response teams who don't always get to be in the same place together."

Watershed stakeholders talk lake health in Haliburton

JAMES MATTHEWS

Staff Reporter

You don't have to be an angler to take steps toward ensuring the health of lakes and waterways.

That little nugget of truth was one of the take-aways from a Watersheds Canada conference May 1-2 at the Pinestone Resort Golf and Conference Centre. Lake and watershed enthusiasts converged in Haliburton to share information and benefit from stewardship project demonstrations.

Lake health stakeholders, environmental professionals, provincial environment officials, and others shared success stories and discovered science-driven practical solutions against the threats to waterway health.

Carolyn Langdon, the Haliburton County Master Gardeners' coordinator, said one of the best ways property owners can improve lake and waterway health is by keeping shorelines as natural as possible.

"Water goes from high to low," she said. "When water travels through land, it travels high to low. So if it can travel through a forest or through vegetated spaces, there's a better chance that the water is slowed down and it's filtered and cleaned before it reaches the lake."

And that's how watersheds are kept healthy, she said. Watersheds Canada has hosted many events through

“

If it can travel through a forest or through vegetated spaces, there's a better chance that the water is slowed down and it's filtered and cleaned before it reaches the lake.

— Carolyn Langdon, Haliburton County Master Gardeners' coordinator

the years, but this was the first time the organization held a national conference. They decided to have it in Haliburton County.

And that's something to be proud of, she said.

"It was such a compliment that they chose Haliburton for their very first conference," she said.

Top scientific talent and grassroots volunteers from across the country took part. They're the best chance for

the future of Canada's lakes and rivers, she said. That concerns is the common tie that bound them.

"The water quality, when it comes to freshwater quality, a lot of it lands on volunteers," Langdon said.

Haliburton County adopted within the last few years bylaws designed to maintain the integrity of the many local shorelines. Stipulations in the bylaw applies to new builds on lake fronts. That leaves the various lake associations an opening to work with owners of pre-existing properties to preserve shorelines.

Langdon said lake associations have been tasked with educating their memberships, the residents on their respective lakes, on how properties can be re-naturalized.

"Everybody in Haliburton County lives within one kilometre of some form of water, whether it's a pond, a stream, a wetland," she said. "One kilometre is nothing. Whatever you do, eventually it all drains into the lake."

The Gull River watershed drains from the county to environments south. So what is done in this county impacts other communities in the south.

"We have a responsibility to keep the waters as clean as possible for ourselves, but also for those of us farther south," Langdon said. "They can't do anything about our activities and, because we are so far north and pretty close to the top of the water source, it puts a lot of responsibility on us."

Haliburton Legion thanks its volunteers

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

On Thursday, May 1, the Haliburton Legion invited all of their volunteers for an appreciation lunch. Quickly on the day, the room became packed with around 100 volunteers and friendly faces, says Legion President Mike Waller.

"We are part of the community," said Waller. "And the community is part of us."

At the appreciation event, Mike and Cheryl Waller had a song performed about them and were presented with a handmade card signed by a large number of volunteers, thanking them for what they do.

"Nothing can be done without volunteers," said Waller. "We have to have volunteers to be successful."

Since joining the Legion, Waller and his wife Cheryl have pushed for the Legion to become a staple in the community. From a meeting place, hangout spot, to hosting local events, the Wallers are committed to removing the stigma of the Legion being a gatekeeping club.

The Legion's number one priority will always remain the service and support of local Veterans, says Waller.

Our Legion is for everyone. As a designated emergency shelter for the Haliburton community, their next goal is to secure a generator.

Recently, the Legion also created an accessible parking space, and completed their elevator last year to encourage more rentals of their four private rooms.

Mike says that he is continuously wowed with how the Haliburton community comes together to support each other and support the Legion and knows the community will support them towards getting a generator.

Last year, when a birthday party was hosted at the Legion, Mike showed some teenagers how to throw darts. The idea to start a youth darts program came to him. Now, participants aged 10 to 18 have a space to come and play darts on Monday nights from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Nowadays with community spaces becoming rare, it is important for communal spaces for youth to have fun that does not cost money.

Mike says that he hopes word spreads about the youth dart program on Monday nights. With plenty of space, the Legion is happy for more youth to hang out and throw some darts.

On Tuesday from 7 p.m. until late, the Legion offers their dart league for people of all ages. On Wednesdays, the Legion has bridge from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., and they host their meat draws on Friday nights.

"No one comes close," said Mike. "We have the best meat draw anywhere."

The Wallers are proud that popularity of the Legion as a community institution has increased and several community groups such as HHHS utilize the space for meet-



Branch 129 Legion President Mike and Cheryl Waller sit with a handmade thank you card given to them by Legion volunteers. /THOMAS SMITH staff

ings and programming.

"It's fantastic to be able to do that and give back" said Mike. "It gives them a place to do what they need to get done."

Leading the Haliburton Legion towards change, Mike says that he enjoys splitting wood and making maple syrup in his spare time.

The Haliburton Legion is hoping to grow their volunteer population. Anyone that is interested in volunteering with the Legion are encouraged to come by the Legion and chat with President Waller. You can also apply to become a member at haliburtonlegion.com.

"We're a lot of fun," said Cheryl Waller.

Ruppert to be featured at open stage

THOMAS SMITH
Staff Reporter

Since its origins at the York Street Internet Cafe and Banks General Store, the Haliburton Folk Society's open stage events have been a staple for the music community in Haliburton. Nowadays the open stages are held at the Haliburton Legion on the second Saturday of each month. Performers play a variety of genres at the open stages including rock and roll, folk, country, jazz, and even spoken word.

"Attendance has grown steadily in the past year," said Dave Boloten, organizer of the Folk Society's open stages. "For the past four months we've filled the Haliburton Legion to its capacity."

The open stage event has become a popular destination for musicians to

hone their talents, with participants coming from as far away as Fenelon Falls and Bracebridge.

"The significant increase in attendance in recent months is evidence of the community support," said Barrie Martin of the Haliburton Folk Society. "We receive lots of positive feedback from attendees and musicians when we share videos and images on social media."

Boloten attributes the increasing popularity of the open stages to marketing through social media, changing their venue to the Haliburton Legion, their volunteer sound engineer Mike Knight, and Brian Sachs, who is responsible for lighting.

Knight, of MAKK Sound has volunteered his expertise every month for the open stages. Without Knight, the musicians would not sound nearly as clear or captivating, says Boloten.

Knight's services and recording studio

can be found at makkssound.com.

For every open stage event, musicians sign up on the night of the event. For the past five months, every spot has filled up quickly, with some musicians having to be turned away.

With a maximum performer capacity of 13 performers, spots fill up by 7 p.m. before the show begins at 7:30 p.m.

"My wife and I moved to Haliburton from Toronto in 2017," said Boloten. "I've always played acoustic guitar and loved folk music (John Pryne, Jackson Browne, Joni Mitchell) so when I found out there was a Folk Society, I joined immediately."

With his first ever public performance being an open stage at the Haliburton Highlands Museum, Boloten became hooked on performing live, and quickly became involved with the folk society. One of his favourite aspects of organizing the open stages is being able to see many talented performers play. After see-

ing Stacey Ruppert play at an open stage, Boloten knew that the society had to reach out and see if she would like to be a featured performer.

"Musicians feel comfortable and relaxed, because no one minds if a mistake is made," said Boloten. "It's a very warm crowd."

The Haliburton Folk Society's next open stage event will be held on Saturday, May 10. Ruppert will be the featured performer.

A guitarist and vocalist who draws inspiration from indie rock, classic rock and rap, Ruppert is ecstatic to be the featured performer and cannot wait to share her love of music with others.

"The feedback we have received in regards to our monthly open stage from the local, as well as the surrounding community, has been tremendously positive," said Boloten. "I think it's safe to say that the word is out."



These boots are made for dancin'

Always in Boots Country Dancing's Karley Stevenson hosted a line dance flashmob outside the Haliburton welcome centre on Saturday morning. About 40 people of all ages rehearsed a choreographed line dance before performing during the flashmob. Stevenson went over some last minute prep-work with the dancers ahead of the Saturday morning dance. / ADAM FRISK Special to the Echo





Gals on the Green is entering their second year, and continues to welcome women of all abilities and skillsets to join in on the fun. /photos submitted

A night out on the Greens

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

Accessible. Social. And above all, fun. That's what Nicole Baumgartner strives for with Gals on the Green.

"It's all about getting outside your comfort zone in a fun way," said the organizer of the weekly group. Now in their second year of operations, Gals on the Green has over 200 members on their Facebook group. With the warm weather upon us, the organizers have set a tee off date of May 20 for this season.

"Anyone can come out," said Baumgartner, "it's for all different ages and abilities."

The idea for Gals on the Green was formalized during a Tuesday evening Canoe FM Bingo session. Baumgartner and her friend, Kayla Gardiner, were listening to the local station, and musing over their shared interest in golf. They realized that there was a need for people in the community - particularly women - to find a fun, social, supportive activity.

Baumgartner had started golfing at the age of 12, and had spent years golfing with women around the area. "I enjoyed that immensely, and I wanted everyone who was interested to have the opportunity to experience the game," she said.

When Baumgartner sees a gap, she does whatever it takes to fill it. As a problem-solver through and through, she started to connect the community dots, and before long, interest started to pour in.

"I've had some people say to me that they've never swung a club before, and others have been doing it their whole lives," she said. "But it's all about doing it in a low stress, very supportive environment."

Generally, between 25 and 40 women show up to the weekly meeting at Pine-



stone. One of the rules for joining is that you can register solo or in a group of two, that way, you have to be paired with new friends on the course. "It's a nice opportunity for helping people form friendships," said Baumgartner, who noted that really, that's what it's all about.

"People were looking for reasons to get out of the house," she said. "For

moms, for young professionals, it's something that people can get excited about."

For their second season, Baumgartner and Gardiner have set up a range of themed nights, including disco night and glow in the dark golf. They have also partnered with a series of local businesses to offer prizes and sponsored holes.

One of the reasons Baumgartner and

Gardiner thought Tuesdays would work, was back to Bingo. "We figured that if we get rained out one of those nights, we can still get a good group of people together and have a social time out of the house to play Radio Bingo all together."

To get involved, visit the Gals on the Green Facebook group, or email Baumgartner at nicole@baumgartnerrealty.ca.



Kattam brings his tam-tams to Haliburton

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

For the first time ever, Kattam Laraki-Côté will be bringing his show *Kattam and his Tam-Tams* to the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion in Haliburton.

"I had the pleasure of seeing Kattam perform two years ago at the Ottawa Children's Festival. It was such an amazing and fun experience," said Nicole Stewart, chair of Razamatazz Kids' Shows. "Filled with colourful traditional clothing and upbeat music, I wanted to bring it to Haliburton to share with the community."

Laraki-Côté is of Quebecois and Moroccan origin. A trained classical musician, Laraki-Côté studied percussion in Havana, djembe and doundoun in Guinea, and the derbuka in Morocco. After returning to his home in Montreal, he also studied the dhol and tabla. For every instrument, he has a master teacher that has shaped how he plays.

Kattam and his Tam-Tams showcases Laraki-Côté's cultural background, in addition to his learned experiences from around the globe.

"The entire performance is so delightful, but the part I loved the most was learning how to do Bollywood style dance moves," said Stewart.

Throughout *Kattam and his Tam-Tams*, audience members are encouraged to get up and dance, with some selected audience members to join Kattam and participate on stage.

Kattam brings the audience along an international journey throughout the Middle East, Africa, and India.

Part interactive music experience and part comedy act, there is something that everyone will enjoy in this show.

Kattam's best friend, a monkey named Takoum, will also be joining him throughout the show.

The globe-spanning list of instruments Kattam plays includes n'goni, balafon, derbouka, and dhol. From Afri-



Kattam and His Tam-Tams will be performed at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion on May 11 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. /Submitted

can rapping to the dance of the desert, Kattam brings his audience along on a highly acclaimed multicultural journey with plenty of jokes along the way.

"This is the first time Razamatazz has presented an

artist with such a range of instruments from around the world," said Stewart. "We are excited to share this with the community."

Kattam and his Tam-Tams will be presented in English, with a smidgen of French likely sprinkled in.

"*Kattam and his Tam Tams* is such a unique and exciting performance for people of any age who enjoy music, song and dance," said Stewart. "It is an especially interesting introduction to world music including African rap, desert dance, trance sufi, and Bollywood dance."

Popular in the Montreal scene, Laraki-Côté has collaborated with other notable artists including Marie-Mai, The Lost Fingers, and Lynda Thalie.

In 2017, Laraki-Côté was nominated for Children's Album of the Year at the Juno Awards.

Kattam Laraki-Côté is also the percussionist for the Montreal-based band Ayrad. Ayrad was nominated for World Music Album of the Year for *Zoubida*. The band also won World Group of the Year at the Canadian Folk Music Awards in 2020.

"Kattam brings a musical performance that is upbeat, danceable, fun and energetic, all designed for kids," said Stewart.

CDs will be available for sale at the concert. After the performance, there will be a djembe drum workshop for up to 20 children. The djembe drum workshop acts as an introduction to African, Indian, and pop rhythms using the djembe drum. The workshop is an additional charge, with a combined ticket for show and workshop being \$15 per child. Tickets for the workshop may also be purchased separately.

Tickets for *Kattam and his Tam Tams* can be purchased online through the Razamatazz website razamatazz.ca or purchased in person at the door with cash. *Kattam and his Tam Tams* will be performed on Sunday, May 11 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Razamatazz Kids' Shows is a locally based nonprofit that has been providing entertaining and diverse cultural performances for over 40 years.



Feelin' groovy

The Highlands Festival Singers presented *Groovin' to the 60s* at the Haliburton United Church on May 4 and May 6 in Haliburton. The groovy show was directed by Melissa Stephens. /TIM YANO staff photographer



To sleep or not to sleep? It shouldn't be a question

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Everyone sleeps, right? Wrong. Over half of Canadians have reported trouble with their sleeping; including getting to sleep, staying asleep, or being sleepy throughout the day.

With the average adult spending over one third of their lifetime in the workforce, this constant state of drowsiness plays its part.

That's where Kelsey Sharpless and Joelle Hill come in. "We are really working on bringing information on sleep and mental health into the community," said Sharpless, a registered social worker and psychotherapist, based out of Minden. "There is such an interconnectedness between mental health and sleep," agreed Hill, a certified sleep consultant.

Sharpless and Hill have paired up to bring the topic of sleep to the forefront across the community. The two specialists have their own practices, but were often connecting over referrals. They started to see some overlap in the needs of their clients; namely around sleep, and the impact it had on mental health in the workplace.

Through their research, it was noted that the top four stress symptoms that cause missed work days were fatigue, sleeplessness, aches/pains, and high anxiety. "With difficulty sleeping, it will impact your daily functioning," noted Hill. "So we try to target employers and organizations to see how it impacts the workplace."

The duo have taken their information on the road with a 60 to 90 minute presentation in an effort to bring sleep hygiene to the forefront. They have connected with multiple municipalities, the Ontario Early Years Centre, Haliburton Highlands Health Services, Scotia Bank,



Joelle Hill and Kelsey Sharpless have started offering programs to effectively showcase the link between proper sleep and workplace wellness. /submitted

and the Minden Animal Hospital, to name a few.

From those organizations, 94 per cent of attendees would recommend the presentation to others, and 92 per cent stated

that the presentation increased their understanding of individual and/or workplace wellness.

The issue with a lack of sleep is that it creates a vicious cycle, or a negative

feedback loop that can simultaneously worsen mental health and sleep. Stress and worry can lead to declining mental health, which then leads to insomnia and sleeplessness, then feelings of fatigue, which results in difficulty focusing, and looping back to stress and worry. And the cycle continues.

"We talk about ways to manage anxiety by recognizing strategies for helpful thinking," said Sharpless. "When we are dysregulated, we use mindfulness as a strategy for mental health."

Hill noted that everyone is subject to a 'bad night' on occasion, "myself included," she laughed. "But there are different sleep drivers such as iron levels, consistent schedules, and factors around sleep pressures that contribute to poor sleep patterns. "There is a very strong connection between depression and insomnia," she said.

Sharpless shared that when they ask a group about concerns around sleeping, "a room full of hands shoot up," she said. "They're glad to have us there, to look at some solutions for them."

Some healthy habits that contribute to a good night's sleep are 20 minutes of movement a day, balanced eating without shame, journaling, and consistent self-care, to name a few items. The presentation also dives into methods of working around supporting factors for sleep, and how to develop safe and healthy routines to maximize that crucial need for sleep.

Once the initial presentation has taken place, Sharpless and Hill offer follow-up conversations, which include consultation, evaluation, and one-on-one support.

To book a presentation for the workplace, contact kelsey@kelseysharpless.com.

To learn more about the services and offerings, visit www.ksharplesscounseling.com and www.hillfamilysleepsolutions.com.

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- CLUES ACROSS
1. Type of bread

5. Range of mountains

10. Ended
12. Musical forms with a recurring theme

14. On the nature of being

16. Law enforcement agency

18. Australian flightless bird

19. Subway rodent

20. More dried-up

22. A beaver might build one

23. Suggestive of the supernatural

25. Art __, around 1920

26. American rocker Snider

27. Not or

28. Earliest human: __-Magnon Man

30. Firearm

31. Tough outer skin of fruit

33. Alternative form of a gene

35. Low shrub some call "fat pork"

37. Plants in the chamomile tribe

38. Revolutionary War era spy

40. Portion of a book

41. Hoover's office

42. Title of respect

44. Tax collector

45. Cool!

48. Real estate

50. Boy's name

52. Airborne (abbr.)

53. Strongly recommends

55. Hit lightly

56. Bar bill

57. Atomic #54

58. Devotes again

63. Fish sauce

65. French stock market

66. Things that consist of two elements or parts

67. Tense

- CLUES DOWN
1. Retired game show host Sajak

2. Equal (prefix)

3. Israeli city __ Aviv

4. Loved

5. A type of analyst

6. Ad __

7. Gasteyer and de Armas are two

8. Ran without moving

9. Opposite of yes

10. Diffuse clouds of gas

11. Mentioning one by one

13. Instruments used to dilate

15. Freshwater fish

17. Remotely-manned flying objects

18. Doctor of Education

21. Renews

23. Not the start

24. Pitching stat

27. Small water buffaloes

29. Ceramic jars

32. I (German)

34. Something to toss on a fire

35. The process of flowing in

36. A series of acts at a night club

39. Egg of a louse

40. Inquire too closely

43. Travelers

44. Drink

46. Behave in a way that degrades

47. Electronic music style

49. Northern Ireland city

51. Upset

54. Stiff structure resembling a hair

59. Father

60. North Atlantic fish

61. 8th month (abbr.)

62. Make an effort

64. Commercial

Answers on page 15

Geocaching Capital of Canada's GeoTour deserves all the hype

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

It has become a recurring joke in my friend group that every small town east of Haliburton is the Geocaching Capital of Canada.

While driving east from the Bass Pro Shop in Barrie for our annual Algonquin Park canoe trip, we noticed the plaque under Gooderham's welcome sign, declaring itself the Geocaching Capital of Canada. (Keep in mind this was before I ever started working with the *Echo* and the *Times*.)

We then drove through Tory Hill. Underneath the Tory Hill sign, is another sign declaring it the Geocaching Capital of Canada.

"You're never going to believe this," I say, driving into Wilberforce.

Once again, a sign declares it the Geocaching Capital of Canada. Then Harcourt.

I could only imagine the beef the town's had towards each other if every one of them was declaring itself the Geocaching Capital of Canada.

Last week, I was assigned to do a story on the Geocaching Capital of Canada and all of these memories of laughing at how every small town east of Haliburton declared themselves the Geocaching Capital of Canada rushes back to me.

I called Mary Barker, whose contact I had from an article I wrote on the Wilberforce Loop Troupe's *Riches and Ransom: Who Kidnapped Mrs. Priscilla Bing?*

Barker, initially confused about my excitement over something that was established eight years ago, graciously explained that the title for the Geocaching Capital of Canada hadn't been claimed prior to 2017. Partnering with Joanne Vanier, the duo teamed up to establish the Geocaching Capital of Canada GeoTour across Highlands East, Irondale, and Harcourt for Canada's sesquicentennial anniversary.

Vanier, Highland East's community economic development and committee coordinator, says that almost 2,000 unique accounts have participated in their GeoTour since its creation.

"It extends our tourist season into the shoulder seasons of spring and fall," says Vanier.

There are 150 caches that are a part of the Geocaching Capital of Canada's GeoTour. They range from the simple, to long treks in the woods, to mind boggling puzzles. Vanier says that each one of them is like a special grandchild.

For those that are not in-the-know about geocaching, a cache is a geographically marked location that has a logbook that you can sign once it is found. Often, there will be trinkets left by others. The Geocaching Capital of Canada's GeoTour can be found using the Geocaching app on your phone under the GeoTour identifier GT5D.

If you take something from the cache, you must leave something, explains Vanier. And the logbook at the cache must be signed.

For the Geocaching Capital of Canada's GeoTour, there are also code words that you must record in a special passport that you can either collect at the Visitor Information Centre in Wilberforce, at Agnew's General Store in Wilberforce, at the Lucky Dollar in Gooderham, Cardiff Country Store in Cardiff. You can also print your own passport.

Vanier explains that if you log 25 caches, you get a GeoTour Achievement Certificate.

Like a goblin obsessed with trinkets, I am instantly smitten. Nay, obsessed with



A castle sits in the forest waiting for geocachers to discover it. /THOMAS SMITH Staff



A heron left it's tracks along the bank of the Grace River near cache number 138 for the Geocaching Capital of Canada's GeoTour.

getting the certificate. She then explains that you get an additional sticker on your 50th cache logged, then 75th. At 100, you get a red ribbon. At 150, you earn a GeoTour 150 coin.

A physical coin that I could add to my hoard of other trinkets and doodads on my shelf?

The mere thought of gamifying the outside world gets my heart pumping.

I get to exercise outside and complete achievements like a video game? Sign me up.

I proudly proclaim to Vanier that I will find them all.

She laughs and says that people normally work on visiting the caches over several years.

I quickly lower my expectations and say that with one day of searching for caches, I will claim the GeoTour Achievement Certificate.

Part of Vanier's job is to check the caches every year to ensure that they are still viable. (Secretly, I think she is using me as free labour to check the caches.)

Vanier gives credit to Barker for the most challenging of the caches. The harder it is, the more likely Barker was the brains behind it.

Vanier lets me know she will keep her ringer on during my attempt.

On the day of my expedition, I slather my face in sunscreen, fill up my water bottle, charge my cell phone, and gather pens to sign logs.

After a photo session for another article, I raced off from Haliburton towards cache number 18 called "Skipping out for Lunch".

How fitting, I think to myself.

From the cache's description, the cache sounds simple to locate, near the old schoolhouse in Essonville.

I pull my car over on the shoulder of the road, grab my phone and jump out

excitedly, ready to find my first cache.

I check the map, which has the cache along the side of the road near a wood-covered shed.

As I approach, I note that it is clearly padlocked shut.

My very first attempt and I cannot find the cache.

Would there be a sign, I think to myself.

No, they do not want to make caches too obvious for everyone to find. At this point, I also realize I forgot to print a passport, so I head to Agnew's General Store.

Entering the store, I ask if they have passports available.

"The what?" asks the cashier. "Oh, for geocaching? I have no idea, I'll have to call someone."

The passports need to be unburied from behind the counter.

"Do you think I can find them all today?" I ask the manager, getting a laugh from a customer at the back of the store.

"I don't know about that," says the manager with a laugh. "People usually take their time."

"Where are you from?" asks the customer, possibly expecting an exotic answer like Ottawa or Montreal.

"Minden," I reply.

After securing my passport, I see that there is a cache called "Check it Out" near the library.

I get to the library and read the description, which tells me to find a redirect outside the library that will lead me to the cache.

I have no idea what a 'redirect' means. I circle around the library, pulling electrical outlet covers and turning over rocks for a clue. Nothing.

I circle around the library again, catching the gaze of a gentleman reading his book as I peer around the windows.

I still find nothing.

I enter the library and ask the librari-

an if they have seen a geocache around lately.

They get up, walk over towards a shelf and say "Gosh, if I was looking for a cache I might look around here."

After way too long, I find the cache in a hidden hollowed out book.

My first cache, I think with delight. What I thought would take five minutes turned into 45.

Are they all like this, I think to myself. Are they all puzzles and challenges capable of destroying the ego and bending my will to desperation? All for a paper certificate?

Yes, yes they were.

On the map, I see cache number three called "Damsel in Distress." I remember Vanier mentioning it on the phone. Must be a good one.

The description of the cache says "All you have to do is find the castle, enter the dungeon, rescue the fair damsel, claim the treasure, easy peasy." The castle ruins are actually the old graphite mine in the area.

I get to the dam on Schofield Road and check the location of the cache. It is deep in the woods.

While I know that the cache is on the property with permission from the owner, I still check my surroundings to make sure no one is watching before crossing the dam and running off into the woods. Yes, running. If I was going to make it to 25 caches in time, I needed to run to get them done.

Oh, and I forgot to wear boots.

Ducking under trees that had fallen during the ice storm I stumble upon a castle near some ruins.

Must be the palace, I think to myself. Now, all I have to do is find this dungeon. I begin to hike around the mine. Surely, the next clue must be within the mine's entrance. I circle the ruins of the mine again and again. In detail, I can list the ins and outs, every nook and cranny of the ruins and every open cavity underneath rocks and boulders capable of fitting your hand under.

This was the incorrect approach. After an hour and a frantic call to Vanier who says that re-digging the mine is not a part of the puzzle, I finally get inside it. It resembles something out of a *Saw* movie and takes me an additional 25 minutes to find the code word.

After this tribulation, it is clear to me that the caches Vanier and Barker created in celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary do not undermine the participant in any way. They are creative, thoughtful, engaging, and fun.

I only wish that I had my fiancé with me. They are a savant with puzzles and I am more of a brute-force-then-give-up-quick kind of guy.

For the next five hours, I continued to go from cache to cache. I solved puzzles, trekked through forests, fell into a river that I did not know existed, learned of Hidden Gem Lake access points, and learned about the rich history and diverse geography of Highlands East.

During my five hour expedition, I was able to log 11 caches before the sun began to set. I vow to claim my certificate soon.

If you are looking for something fun and free to do throughout the year, I recommend geocaching in the Geocaching Capital of Canada to anyone and everyone.

It truly lives up to its title and has sparked a passion that will create invaluable memories and make new friends.

In the meantime, look for me on the trails, on the side of the road, maybe even on your front lawn.

While this coin-sized space on my knick-knack shelf remains empty, just know that I will not rest until I earn it.

May the Fourth be with your repairs

Dave Paddock of Algonquin Outfitters helped out at SIRCH's monthly Repair Cafe on May 4 in Haliburton. Running regularly through the warmer months, the Repair Cafe aims to provide a second life to worn out or run-down items, in an effort to save them from landfills. Repair Cafes for all of 2025 will take place on the first Sunday of each month at the SIRCH Bistro and Bakery, located at 49 Maple Ave. in Haliburton. /TIM YANO staff photographer



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The Municipality of Highlands East is currently recruiting for a

Summer Student Landfill Attendant

If you are currently enrolled in secondary school or a post-secondary program and returning to school in the fall of 2025, you are encouraged to apply for this opportunity.

This position is available from June through to the end of August.

Position Details:

- Assist the Landfill Attendant with the following:
- Direct the public as to where waste is to be deposited within the landfill site area and provide assistance when required;
- Maintain and operate the landfill site in accordance with the Environmental Compliance Approval issued by the MECP;
- Ensure hazardous materials are handled according to Ministry guidelines;
- Maintain accurate records of incoming loads, monies received, log summaries, collect tipping fees and issue receipts;
- Inspect the site daily to ensure public safety and regulatory compliance;
- Clean landfill premises and around recycling bins, fence and gate areas on a daily basis;
- Perform other duties as assigned.

If you are interested in applying, applications **clearly marked with Summer Student- Landfill Attendant** may be submitted on or before 12:00 p.m, Friday, May 16th, 2025, via mail, in person, fax or email. Interested applicants may submit their resume, in confidence to:

Brittany McCaw, CAO/Treasurer
Municipality of Highlands East
P.O. Box 295, 2249 Loop Road
Wilberforce, ON K0L 3C0
Fax: 705-448-2532 E-Mail: **bmccaw@highlandseast.ca**

We thank all applicants for their interest but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

The Municipality of Highlands East is an equal opportunity employer. Applicants requiring accommodation are asked to contact the CAO/Treasurer.
Applicant information is collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and will be used to determine qualifications for employment with the Municipality of Highlands East. Questions about this collection should be directed to
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650 OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Roger Scheffee

Age 74, of Haliburton, Ontario passed away bravely and peacefully by his own wishes on April 28, 2025 at his home in Gravenhurst, Ontario after a difficult 15-month battle with cancer. Roger was born on September 3, 1950 in Haliburton, Ontario.

He worked in sales all across Canada, but enjoyed being a bus and coach driver the best. He travelled North America providing tours to hundreds of people, sharing his travel stories and experiences – a true travel guide. When life slowed down, he took great pride in transporting the local kids back and forth to school before fully retiring and moving to Gravenhurst to be closer to his daughter and her family.

Roger was a gifted hockey player from a young age, a natural defenceman - earning himself the nickname "Wire". He played internationally in Europe before returning to Ontario, where he continued to play hockey until he was 62. Roger loved the outdoors, especially snowshoeing, hiking and 4-wheeling. "The Lake" in Haliburton Forest was one of his favourite places to spend time with family. Fishing, snorkeling or playing his guitar around the fire singing all the favourites that everyone loved to sing along to.

Roger is survived by his daughter Melissa (Adam), his grandsons Bennett, Aidan and Tristan, his brother Peter and his nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Mark and Denise Scheffee and his sister Cindy.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Haliburton Legion on May 10th, 2025 from 12-2pm.



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640 IN MEMORIAM



In loving memory of

Netty Alexander

January 13, 1954 - May 11, 2023

To our loving wife,
mother & grandmother

Two years have passed, and
there is never a day that goes
by that we do not think of you.

Forever in our hearts,
David Alexander & Family

*Call to place your
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today...*

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In Loving Memory of

**Parkes, Georgina Audrey
(nee McCrory)**

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of our mom, Georgina, on Thursday April 24, 2025 at the age of 96.

Beloved wife of the late Harold Parkes, loving mom of Denise (Paul Westbrook), Karen and Suzanne, loving grandma of Andrew (Corrie), Kelsey (William), Samantha (Jamie) and Lindsey (James) and great-grandma of Elliot, Riley, Harper and Caden.

Georgina will be missed by family and friends, but we take comfort in the many wonderful memories we share, and that she will now be reunited with Harold.

A private service and internment will take place at Park Lawn Cemetery, Toronto. A Celebration of Life will be held in the summer, with the date to be published.

Memorial donations to the R.C.L. Branch #636 Memorial Fund in lieu of flowers would be appreciated by the family.



Barbara "Jeanette" Clifford (nee Adaway)

Resident of Haliburton

Barbara "Jeanette" Clifford (née Adaway) passed away peacefully on April 28, 2025, at the Haliburton Hospital in her 95th year, with her loving son Steve by her side. She is now reunited with her husband, Bob, her daughter June, her grandchild Jim, and his partner Diane, who predeceased her.

Barbara was born in England on November 5th, 1929, to her parents, George and Amelia Adaway (both predeceased). Barbara and Bob immigrated to Canada after the war, bringing with them the warmth, strength, and graciousness that would define their lives. She settled in Ontario, where she embraced her role as the quintessential 1950s housewife—elegant, poised, and always ready to host with grace and a warm smile. Her home was often the center of laughter and conversation, especially during the many last-minute dinner parties her beloved husband Bob would spring on her for friends and coworkers.

Barbara had a deep love for the outdoors, and she thrived in the Haliburton Highlands, where she spent decades snowmobiling through the trails she came to know so well. When not outside enjoying nature, she found solace in her garden and joy in the pages of her favorite books.

She is remembered with love by her son Steve, her dear sister Kathleen and brother-in-law Raymond, her granddaughter-in-law, Jody, and her great-great-grandson JT (Gabriella), along with extended family and friends.

Barbara's family wishes to extend heartfelt thanks to Dr. Gilmour and the caring medical staff at the Haliburton Hospital for their compassion and support. A very special thank you goes to her devoted friend Maggie, whose love, care, and unwavering dedication brought comfort and companionship to Barbara in her later years.

Barbara's legacy of hospitality, warmth, and spirited independence will live on in the hearts of all who knew her

Funeral Arrangements

As per Barbara's wishes, cremation has taken place. As an expression of sympathy, donations in Barbara's memory to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation would be appreciated by the family. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 Hwy. #118 Haliburton, Ontario K0M 1S0 (705) 457-9209.

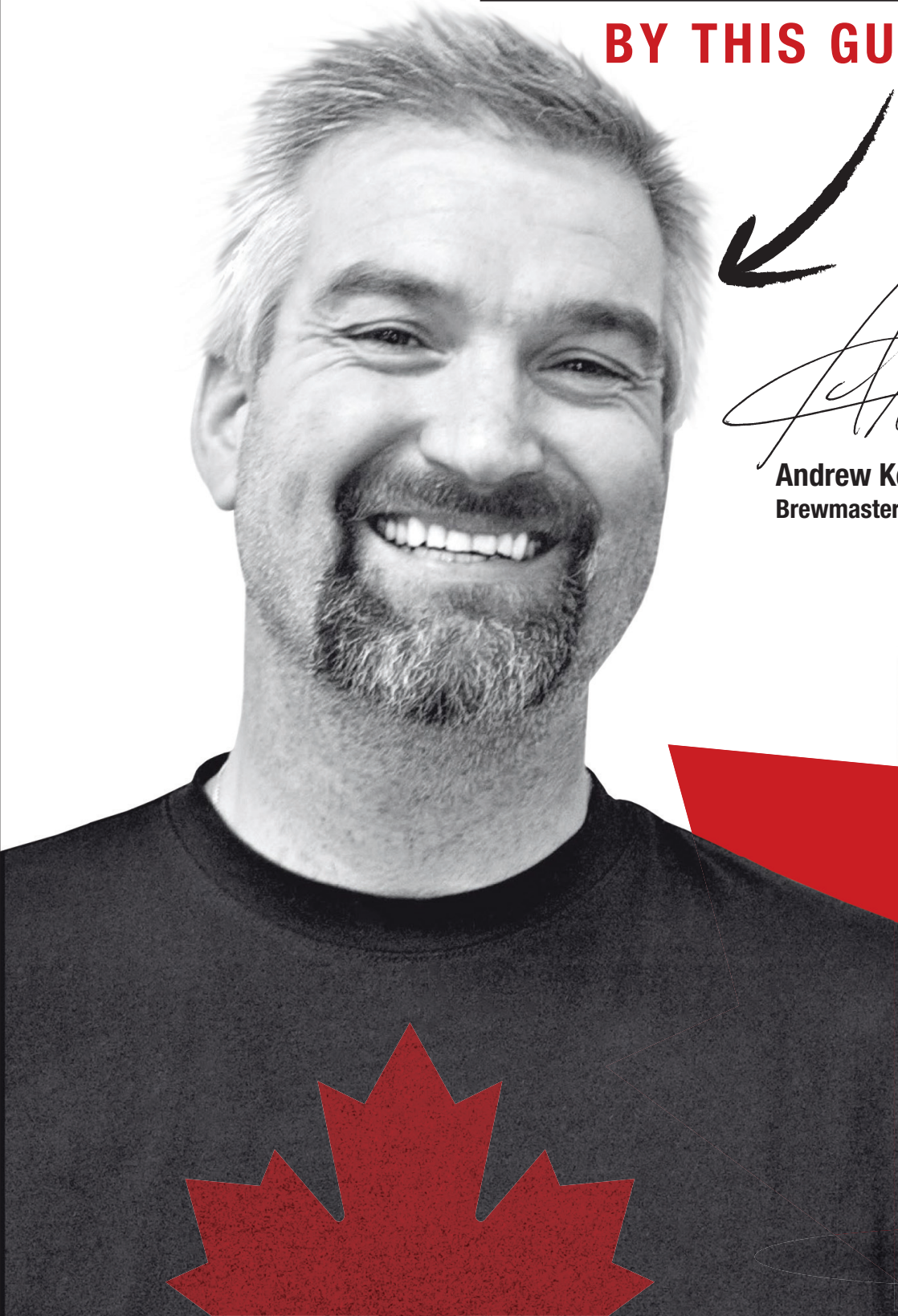

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The
Haliburton
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TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2010



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■ **ECONOMY**

Donald plant to be restored

JENN WATT
Editor

Sixty-four years after it was abandoned by the Standard Chemical Company, the distribution building in Donald is being reborn as a business hub in Haliburton County.

The extensive work needed to bring the deteriorating building up to adequate standards is well worth the time, money and effort, says Leora Berman, who is heading up the project.

It is one of the few concrete formed buildings left, she said, "we can't see this building disappear."

Berman, along with the owner of the building Jim O'Connor, are going through the necessary zoning and planning steps to access grant funding, which will help them get the building back in shape.

See **Building** page 13



A night at the movies

The Highland Festival Singers dazzled at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion on May 15 and 16 as they took audience members on a trip down memory lane and sang a variety of hit songs from the movies. For more photos turn to page 20.

■ **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Library to launch extensive user survey

CHAD INGRAM
Staff reporter

Haliburton County's library board is embarking on a massive user survey of its eight

branches in an attempt to make the libraries better suited to their patrons.

Board members made the decision at a May 12 meeting at the Stanhope library.

"The question really here is

what are we going to do with eight branches?" Bessie Sullivan, the county's chief librarian, asked the board members.

The county owns and operates the new Minden Hills and Dysart libraries, along with

branches in Cardiff, Dorset, Gooderham, Highland Grove, Stanhope and Wilberforce.

The Minden Hills and Dysart libraries, which both opened in 2009, have all the amenities of

See **Small** page 10



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